

HOUSE BILL REPORT

SJM 8005

As Reported by House Committee On:
Transportation

Brief Description: Requesting that state route number 117 be designated as the POW/MIA Memorial Highway.

Sponsors: Senators Hargrove, King, Sheldon, Eide, Hobbs, Hatfield, Benton, Padden, Shin and Chase.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Transportation: 3/20/13, 3/28/13 [DPA].

Brief Summary of Bill
(As Amended by Committee)

- Requests that State Route 117 be designated as the Prisoner of War/Missing in Action (POW/MIA) Memorial Highway.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Majority Report: Do pass as amended. Signed by 28 members: Representatives Clibborn, Chair; Fey, Vice Chair; Lias, Vice Chair; Moscoso, Vice Chair; Orcutt, Ranking Minority Member; Hargrove, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Overstreet, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Angel, Bergquist, Farrell, Freeman, Habib, Hayes, Johnson, Klippert, Kochmar, Kretz, Kristiansen, Moeller, Morris, Riccelli, Rodne, Ryu, Sells, Shea, Takko, Tarleton and Zeiger.

Staff: Alyssa Ball (786-7140).

Background:

The Washington State Transportation Commission (WSTC) is responsible for naming state transportation facilities, including highways and bridges. The WSTC's policy states: "a naming is done in a thorough and deliberative manner to honor and institute an enduring memory of a person or group of people who have contributed significantly to the well-being of the state or nation and with the widespread support of the people from the area in which

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the facility is located." In order for the WSTC to consider a proposal, the requesting entity must provide sufficient evidence indicating community support and acceptance of the proposal. This evidence can include a letter or support from the state or federal legislator representing the area encompassing the facility to be renamed. Other evidence that can provide proof of community support includes a resolution passed by other elected bodies in the impacted area, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) support, and supportive action from a local organization such as a chamber of commerce.

Upon passage of a joint memorial requesting the naming of a facility, the WSTC holds a public hearing prior to taking action. After the WSTC takes final action, the WSDOT designs and installs the appropriate signs.

Summary of Amended Bill:

The WSTC is requested to commence proceedings to name State Route 117 in Clallam County between the junction of State Route 101 and Marine Drive in the City of Port Angeles as the Prisoner of War/Missing in Action (POW/MIA) Memorial Highway. Copies of the memorial must be forwarded to the Secretary of Transportation, the WSTC, and the WSDOT.

Amended Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The amendment corrects the Secretary of Transportation's name and includes additional findings regarding POW/MIAs in the Gulf War and the Cold War.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The idea for the memorial highway grew out of personal interaction with POW/MIAs of wars. The proponents of this bill do not want these men and women to be forgotten. There were 8,000 POWs in the Korean War. A vast majority of the POWs did not survive. In August 1953, 4,000 POWs were exchanged. The proponents were happy to see them return but were devastated to see the condition they returned in. We have thousands of memorials all over the world and they are all very important and part of our history. This memorial would honor those who were POW/MIAs.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Gerald Grettela and Don Roberts, Korean War Veterans Association.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.